The meeting was called to order at 11 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

Reports of the Secretary-General on the Sudan

Report of the Secretary-General on the deployment of the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (S/2009/297)

Report of the Secretary-General on the deployment of the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (S/2009/352)

The President: I should like to inform the Council that I have received letters from the representatives of the Sudan and Sweden, in which they request to be invited to participate in the consideration of the item on the Council's agenda. In conformity with the usual practice, I propose, with the consent of the Council, to invite those representatives to participate in the consideration of the item, without the right to vote, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Hassan (Sudan) took a seat at the Council table; Mr. Lidén (Sweden) took the seat reserved for him at the side of the Council Chamber.

The President: In accordance with the understanding reached in the Council's prior consultations, I shall take it that the Security Council agrees to extend an invitation under rule 39 of its provisional rules of procedure to Mr. Alain Le Roy, Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations.

It is so decided.

I invite Mr. Le Roy to take a seat at the Council table.

I should like to acknowledge the presence at the Council table of His Excellency Mr. Mikhail Margelov, Special Representative of the President of the Russian Federation on the Sudan and Chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee of the Council of Federation and the Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation. On behalf of the Council, I extend a warm welcome to him.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations. Members of the Council have before them two reports of the Secretary-General on the deployment of the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur, contained in documents S/2009/297 and S/2009/352.

At this meeting, the Security Council will hear a briefing by Mr. Alain Le Roy, Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations. I now give him the floor.

Mr. Le Roy (*spoke in French*): Thank you, Mr. President, for giving me the opportunity to brief the Security Council on the situation in Darfur. The Council has before it the most recent report of the Secretary-General on the deployment of the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID) and related issues (S/2009/352). I should like to highlight a few key points in the report and to share with members some more general observations about our efforts to put an end to this crisis.

First, I wish to confirm that we are entering a new phase in UNAMID's deployment. Over the next few months, we will see the arrival of five more battalions and five more infantry companies. We are also trying to have the final two remaining battalions deployed by the end of the year. As far as the police are concerned, the deployment of nine of the 11 formed police units by December is on track, and we continue to work to ensure that the two remaining units are also deployed by the end of the year.

This final phase of deployment is occurring at a time when a new official will be joining the mission. As members are aware, the Secretary-General and the Chairperson of the African Union proposed the appointment of Lieutenant General Patrick Nyamvuba of Rwanda as new UNAMID Force Commander. He will assume his duties by the end of August, taking over from General Martin Luther Agwai.

Permit me to take this opportunity to pay tribute to the efforts of General Agwai on behalf of the African Union, the United Nations and, of course, the people of Darfur. He headed the force of one of the largest and most complex peacekeeping operations in

history during its particularly difficult initial phase. We are very grateful to him for that.

His successor will join the mission at a time when priorities will be in the process of changing. Thus far, by definition, the emphasis has been on deployment and on developing methods of working with the Government, the parties to the conflict and other actors. While we have made much progress in each of those areas, much certainly remains to be done. In particular, we must not overlook the issue of visas, which we stress at every Tripartite Committee meeting, including the most recent. We will continue to insist that all visas for all nationalities be issued within a reasonable time frame.

As 2009 is moving forward with steady increases each month in the percentage of forces deployed, the mission will soon be able to devote less energy to establishing itself and more to carrying out ground operations, including the implementation of its protection mandate.

That brings me to the second topic I should like to stress. The Secretary-General's report reiterates that UNAMID is basically a protection operation. The arrival of promised military and police assets and the shift from deployment to operations must, above all, be translated into more effective protection work. That will include carrying out even more forward patrols than those already being increasingly undertaken by the mission, and ensuring an even more sustained presence in and around key locations, such as camps for internally displaced persons (IDPs), where the most vulnerable populations live. But it will also mean closer collaboration with the rest of the protection community: non-governmental organizations (NGOs), United Nations agencies and governmental forces, which are also responsible for and engaged in civilian protection.

I discussed this at length with my colleagues during my stay at El Fasher two weeks ago. We agreed that expectations are very high regarding the mission's performance for the rest of the year and that we must do our utmost to meet the challenge.

The third element in the report to which I would like to draw attention concerns the changes in the security situation in Darfur. UNAMID is now carrying out its mission in an environment different from that in which it was initially mandated to function. The report reflects those changes and the context. Very large-scale violence associated with civilian deaths and displacement is no longer a major characteristic of the crisis. Today, attacks are more localized and generally carried out by rebels against the Government or by the Government against rebels, or are even inter-ethnic conflicts.

The deterioration in Chad-Sudan relations is a significant factor in this changing environment. Council members will recall that the 2004 humanitarian ceasefire between the Government and rebels, which gave all of us hope for an imminent end to the violence, was negotiated and signed at N'Djamena. It is difficult to imagine something like that happening today, given the tense relations between Chad and the Sudan. The bombings of Sudanese territory by Chadian military aircraft on 16 July did nothing to improve the situation.

(*spoke in English*)

The evolution of the crisis does not in any way diminish the tragedy of Darfur or lessen the suffering of the 2.7 million displaced, but it does require that our analysis and actions correspond to realities on the ground. The United Nations will have to adapt to be effective. This also affects mediation efforts. The Secretary-General's report also discusses how Joint Chief Mediator Bassolé has worked to recalibrate his approach to reflect the fluidity of the situation on the ground.

Since the report was issued, one positive development has emerged with the release by the Justice and Equality Movement of over 60 prisoners through the mediation of the International Committee of the Red Cross.

A fourth area I would like to highlight relates to the direct link between the Darfur crisis and implementation of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA). In my 17 July briefing to the Council, I shared our serious concern regarding the status of CPA implementation. Delays, misunderstandings and disagreements between the partners on key issues — including border demarcation and the census results — continue to put the CPA at risk. Failure of the CPA would result in a deep crisis throughout the Sudan and the region and cause further suffering to already vulnerable populations.

In this context, it is of course very important to commend the parties for their conduct in their reaction

to the decision on Abyei taken by the Permanent Court of Arbitration on 22 July. They should be commended for the composure they have shown in accepting the decision. The parties must build on their approach to the Court's decision to tackle other key issues and to improve the level and quality of their collaboration.

Despite the good news surrounding Abyei, there is still a sense of drift surrounding CPA implementation, with direct implications for resolving the crisis in Darfur. The uncertainty surrounding elections provide a good example. The contested census, large-scale displacement and volatility — particularly in the area bordering Chad — create enormous risks that the people of Darfur will not be in a position to participate in the electoral process. This would further disenfranchise millions already disempowered by conflict.

The results of any elections would also have enormous impact on the political dispensation in Darfur. Elected officials would constitute a newly minted set of stakeholders and would have to be engaged in discussions of peacemaking in Darfur. There is also a real risk that rebel movements may elect to reduce their engagement in the mediation, preferring to monitor and perhaps seek advantage from the difficulties that the Government of National Unity is facing on CPA implementation.

These, clearly, are only scenarios, but they illustrate the clear linkages between the CPA and the conflict in Darfur. It is now more important than ever that we see both issues as parts of a whole and that we understand both issues to be linked to the marginalization of large portions of the population. I can assure the Council that the Secretariat and the African Union Commission are working together on this basis to support the Sudanese in their efforts to resolve the many serious challenges they face.

In this context, we very much look forward to the recommendations to be made by the High-Level Panel being led by President Mbeki. I met with President Mbeki and his colleagues when I was in Addis Ababa 10 days ago. It is clear that the work they are undertaking will make a significant contribution to our efforts to bring lasting peace to all of the Sudan.

I have focused my remarks on highlighting certain aspects of the Secretary-General's most recent report on UNAMID and Darfur. I would like to conclude by offering some additional observations.

It has been more than five years since the Council first addressed this crisis. While the situation on the ground has changed, we are in many ways no closer to a solution now than we were when the issue was first taken up by this body. This is deeply distressing because of the human suffering that has occurred in the intervening years. It is also deeply frustrating, because the elements of a solution have in many ways always been clear.

The Government must make serious concessions and illustrate its commitment to Darfur through active investment in its people and infrastructure. The rebels must make the interests of their people their sole priority, compromise among themselves and agree a serious platform for discussions. Abstaining from dialogue is not a policy — it is only a posture. The supporters and patrons of both the Government and the rebel movements must once and for all refuse to support war. Dialogue must become the only serious option. The arms and financial support must stop flowing. The safe havens must disappear.

Until there is sustained progress in each of these areas, we will not see a resolution to the crisis. Instead, we will continue to meet in this Chamber to discuss an apparently intractable situation. The alternative is to muster the political will and unity of purpose required to address this crisis in all its heart-wrenching complexity.

Ultimate responsibility for bringing peace and stability to Darfur lies with the Sudanese. This is their right and their obligation. The will to peace and the sacrifices required to achieve it will come from them. We need to continue to hold them to the highest standard in this regard.

At the same time, the international community, and countries in the region in particular, have a central role to play in creating the conditions which will help the Sudanese to address these challenges. These conditions include the provision of concrete incentives to the parties to reach agreement and guarantees that new agreements will be implemented. This Council, along with the African Union Peace and Security Council, which pronounced itself on UNAMID earlier this week, will continue to be called on to mobilize the will and capacity of the parties to transcend this conflict in the only possible way — through a negotiated political agreement that puts an effective end to the marginalization of Darfur.

The President: I thank Mr. Le Roy for his briefing.

I shall now give the floor to the members of the Security Council.

Mr. Margelov (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): At the outset, I should like to thank Mr. Alain le Roy, Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, for his detailed briefing on the situation in Darfur and the deployment of the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID).

The Secretary-General has repeatedly focused on the indivisibility of peace in the Sudan and has noted the need for a comprehensive approach to resolving the conflict in Darfur and to achieving a peaceful settlement in the country.

Our task today is to pave the way to peace in the Sudan. This is a difficult task, especially when we recall that the modern and most recent history of the Sudan has seen an alternation between dependence and independence, conflicts among provinces, religions and ethnic groups, and almost continuous civil war. The country today is in a state of deep civil strife. Military activities of varying intensity are interrupted only by brief and fragile ceasefires. These activities are exacerbating the country's humanitarian problems. Experts claim that, today, the Sudan is either incapable of feeding itself or is having great difficulty doing so. Meeting the alimentary needs of the South alone already requires 75,000 tons of food. The situation is holding only because of lowered demand in the South and the North.

The Sudan requires the ongoing attention of the international community. We must strive to intensify dialogue between the conflicting parties in Darfur and to ensure the implementation of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement between the North and the South. For now, there is no other way to establish peace in the Sudan.

It is necessary to recall that the conflicts in that country are underpinned by many factors. The reasons for clashes are sometimes difficult to identify clearly. For example, Khartoum officially considers the rebels to be separatists, which defines the conflict as one between separatists and central Government. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon places emphasis on an environmental problem — lack of water — in Darfur and the resulting fighting between sedentary and nomadic populations. There is also the view that the Janjaweed militia is forcing non-believers off their land, which gives the conflict an ostensibly religious dimension. Others believe that the conflict has ethnic roots, and still others focus on natural resources and assert that the various sides are seeking to divide revenues from these resources.

Yet all those elements are present, which means that a kind of civil war over economic interests is under way in the Sudan. A number of humanitarian organizations believe that the Sudanese Government wishes, with the assistance of the Janjaweed, to force African tribes out of Darfur so that they can develop oil fields there.

I believe that all of those elements spoken of by experts and representatives of non-governmental organizations, and others as well, are in play in the tragedy in the Sudan. Hence the difficulty of finding a peaceful settlement. We are convinced that to resolve the problems of Darfur there is no alternative to the parties reaching comprehensive political agreements, first and foremost on bring about security in Darfur. The implementation of such agreements would be supported by UNAMID.

Today, conditions for negotiations between Khartoum and the Justice and Equality Movement (JEM), the main rebel group, have become complicated. It is well known that, in February, with the mediation of the African Union, the United Nations and Qatar, the sides signed an Agreement of Goodwill, which addressed the issues of exchanges of prisoners of war and increasing international humanitarian activity in Darfur. This was followed by the International Criminal Court's (ICC) issuance of a warrant for the arrest of the President of the Sudan, the Sudanese Government's decision to ban the activities of a number of humanitarian missions, JEM's refusal to continue negotiations and new armed conflict among the sides in Darfur.

Recently in Doha, representatives of the Justice and Equality Movement accused the Sudanese Government of having broken off the negotiations, saying that it was Khartoum that had failed to produce any strategic proposals. As a result, the negotiating process is now at an impasse. Moreover, the Qatar agreement of good intentions lacks the signature of an influential field commander, the opposition leader Abdul Wahid Mohammed al-Nur. The international

community must actively work to get the sides to focus on resuming political dialogue without preconditions. The dialogue should be truly comprehensive. It is necessary to put pressure on rebel leaders who refuse to participate in a settlement. A number of provisions of Security Council decisions remain relevant, relating to the Council's readiness to take measures against those who hinder progress in the peace process; we believe that this is very important.

An agreement on the normalization of relations with Chad was also signed at Doha, but the fact is that it is not now being observed. There is no doubt that stabilizing Darfur will be impossible without strengthened trust between the Sudan and Chad. We are gravely concerned by violations of the Sudan's borders and air strikes against the territory of Darfur by the Chadian air force. We believe that both sides should demonstrate political will in establishing good-neighbourly relations, which would be in the interest of the entire subregion. In our view, a basis for negotiations and the relevant mechanisms for this normalization already exist.

But we note that the ICC's issuance of a warrant for the arrest of the President of the Sudan, Omer Al-Bashir, does not contribute to a peaceful settlement in Darfur. It is well known that the African Union favours full guarantees for the safety and security of the President of the Sudan: in other words, progress in the negotiations takes priority over the judicial process, because it is considered that activities under the slogan of judicial fairness are undermining the ongoing peace process. And there can be no doubt that the process is ongoing, albeit with certain complications. The African Union also believes that the International Criminal Court is ignoring Arab and African efforts to resolve the conflict in the Sudan.

In the interest of making progress towards a peaceful settlement in Darfur while ensuring fairness and observance of the norms of international law, Russia understands the approach of the African Union, the League of Arab States and the Non-Aligned Movement to resolving this political and legal problem. In our view, what is important is making comprehensive progress towards a settlement and ensuring the country's territorial integrity. We are particularly concerned about the general elections planned in the Sudan for April 2010. Time is inexorably moving on, and the process of preparation for those elections is at an impasse. In that connection, a key task is to ensure that the elections are held. Successful elections should bring Sudanese society together. They are also a prerequisite for the next step: the 2011 referendum on the status of Southern Sudan, which, essentially, is the principal element of the 2005 Comprehensive Peace Agreement.

With respect to implementation of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement, we welcome the settlement of one of the most complex problems: the conflict over the administrative borders of the Abyei region. We are pleased that Khartoum and Juba both agreed to the decision by the Permanent Court of Arbitration at The Hague and have reaffirmed their commitment to its unfailing implementation. We view this as a very important step forward. We consider that the decision should contribute to preserving the unity of the Sudan, which is of paramount importance for ensuring long-term stability in the country and throughout the African continent.

I wish in conclusion to commend UNAMID for its activities. I have repeatedly observed its work in the field, and I can say that it is effective. We view the Mission as an important integral component of the process of settling the problems of Darfur. It is of particular importance that during the reporting period it was thanks to the activities of peacekeepers it was possible to avoid numerous casualties during armed clashes between the parties to the conflict in Darfur, and also to provide humanitarian assistance to the civilian population.

Let me share a personal impression: in 2009 El Fasher and Nyala were completely different cities from those I saw in 2007; the feeling is completely different there. To a large extent, the feeling one gets when arriving today can be attributed to the activities of UNAMID.

I wish in particular to thank the United Kingdom delegation for having prepared a draft resolution on the extension of the Mission's mandate. The Russian delegation is ready to continue working on that Council decision. It is necessary to ensure a unified approach by the Security Council to resolving the problems of Darfur. Only in that way will it be possible to make progress in the political dialogue among the parties in Darfur, to deploy and ensure the effectiveness of UNAMID and to normalize the humanitarian situation. I wish also to emphasize that we are looking to move ahead in all areas of a Sudan

settlement on the sole basis of constructive and equitable dialogue between the international community and the Government of the Sudan, with respect for the country's sovereignty.

Sir John Sawers (United Kingdom): Let me begin by thanking Under-Secretary-General Le Roy for his briefing and for introducing the Secretary-General's very helpful report (S/2009/352). It is very welcome that we have Mr. Margelov with us today; it is good to have him here, and his comprehensive statement was very helpful to the Council.

The Sudan remains at the top of the Security Council agenda. We are focused on Darfur today, but the Comprehensive Peace Agreement remains the highest priority and the most urgent issue. Let me just put on record that United Kingdom welcomes the responses of all parties to the decision of the Permanent Court of Arbitration on Abyei, which I think will move the situation on the North-South process forward.

On Darfur, the Council's strategy is focused on four tracks: peacekeeping, political, humanitarian and judicial. The Secretary-General's report shows that progress has been made on some of these but that we still have further to go.

On the first track — peacekeeping — we welcome the progress highlighted in the Secretary-General's report on deploying the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID). The improved cooperation from the Government of the Sudan is particularly welcome. The Secretary-General reports serious concerns still over the slowness with which visas are being issued for UNAMID staff despite the progress of the Tripartite Committee, and we call on the Government of the Sudan to solve that problem and to ensure access to the region for UNAMID personnel and freedom of movement within Darfur, which the Secretary-General also highlights as a serious concern.

Overall, UNAMID's performance still has room to improve. It is now two years since this Council adopted resolution 1769 (2007), and UNAMID has not had the effect that we all wanted it to have. We welcome the Secretary-General's commitment to reaching 92 per cent deployment by the end of this year, but we are all conscious that previous such targets have been missed. Those relate to the numbers of personnel. The more important measure is UNAMID's capability to implement its mandate across Darfur, and I welcome Mr. Le Roy's estimate on what proportion of UNAMID's design capability is now in place and what proportion will be in place by the end of the year.

The United Kingdom agrees with the Secretary-General that the protection of civilians and the facilitation of humanitarian assistance should be the priority tasks for UNAMID. As UNAMID becomes more able to implement its mandate, it will also be important for us to monitor its progress, identify where the obstacles lie and adjust the tasking and configuration of the force accordingly.

On the second track — the political process — progress remains painfully slow. However effective UNAMID becomes, it will not be able to solve Darfur's problems alone. UNAMID is designed as a peacekeeping force and it needs a peace to keep. The United Kingdom supports the African Union-United Nations Joint Chief Mediator, Mr. Bassolé, and the contribution of the Government of Qatar. I would like to echo what Mr. Margelov said earlier. We urge all parties, including rebel movements, to engage with the Mediator without preconditions and show maximum flexibility to resolve areas of disagreement.

On the third track — the humanitarian — as the Secretary-General notes, the security situation in Darfur remains volatile and the situation for civilians deeply troubling. A staggering 4.7 million Darfuris need humanitarian assistance, with about a third of the population — 2.6 million people — internally displaced and unable to return home. Banditry and sexual violence continue to plague civilians across Darfur, as the Secretary-General's report notes.

It remains inexplicable why the Government of the Sudan wanted to add to the misery of the people of Darfur by expelling 13 international non-governmental organizations. The Secretary-General's report suggests that now some 5,000 fewer international aid workers are in Darfur than before the expulsions — a fall of over 25 per cent. That can only complicate the delivery of humanitarian relief. So efforts must continue to close the gap between need and provision.

The Under-Secretary-General also commented on the regional dimension, and we echo his call for improved relations between Chad and the Sudan. Those are is essential if the people of Darfur are to have a safe and secure future. We need real cooperation between Khartoum and N'Djamena and less trading of accusations.

The fourth track is the judicial one, where progress is needed. No one has been held to account for the crimes of the past six years. We call again on the Sudan to comply with resolution 1593 (2005), relating to the International Criminal Court. To consider article 16 of the Rome Statute for any indictee, we would need to see concrete action for peace by the Government of the Sudan, reflected in changes on the ground and genuine cooperation with the International Criminal Court.

Lastly, UNAMID's mandate expires at the end of this month, and, as Mr. Margelov mentioned, the United Kingdom has circulated a draft resolution to extend it for a further year. In line with the Secretary-General's report, the draft resolution underlines that the protection of civilians and humanitarian relief are the priority issues for UNAMID. In line with the Council's wider peacekeeping agenda, it requests the Secretary-General to develop benchmarks and timelines to track and measure UNAMID's ability to implement its mandate, as we have done with other peacekeeping missions, such as the United Nations Mission in the Sudan, the United Nations Mission in the Central African Republic and Chad, and the United Nations Observer Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. The draft resolution expresses support for the peace process and calls on all rebel groups to engage, and it calls for an improvement in the humanitarian situation, including the implementation of the Joint Communiqué between the Government of Sudan and the United Nations on Facilitation of Humanitarian Activities in Darfur.

We will continue to conduct consultations with other delegations in order to reach a broad agreement on the draft resolution to put it to the vote next week.

Mr. Puente (Mexico) (*spoke in Spanish*): I would like to start by thanking Under-Secretary-General Alain Le Roy for his presentation of the report of the Secretary-General on the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (S/2009/352). I also welcome the presence of Mr. Mikhail Margelov of the Russian Federation at this meeting of the Security Council.

Mexico supports the actions taken by the United Nations in the Sudan and Darfur, and reiterates its conviction regarding the fundamental and crucial role that the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID) and the United Nations Mission in the Sudan are playing in providing peace and stability in the country. It hopes that the work of both missions will be reflected in the improvement of the life of the Sudanese people as a whole.

We are pleased to note the improved functioning of the cooperation mechanisms between the Government of the Sudan and the missions deployed on the ground, and we hope that that trend continues so that the missions have better opportunities to discharge their mandates.

We recognize the great importance of the negotiations between the Government of the Sudan and the Justice and Equality Movement, that were held in Doha with the purpose of assessing the implementation of the Agreement of Goodwill and Confidence-building for the Settlement of the Problem in Darfur, signed by both parties last February, under the auspices of Qatar, the United Nations and the African Union. At the same time, we urge the parties to pursue the path of dialogue and hope that the negotiations will resume and result in significant agreements that contribute to the stability of the Sudan, in particular in the light of the 2010 election.

My delegation notes with concern the risks pointed out by Mr. Le Roy concerning the implementation of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement. In that regard, we recognize the importance of the parties complying with the decision of the Permanent Court of Arbitration of The Hague on the region of Abyei.

We acknowledge the work of the Joint Chief Mediator, Mr. Bassolé, and of the African Union High-Level Panel on Darfur headed by the former President of South Africa, Thabo Mbeki, and we believe that the international community should support their work so as to maintain the current momentum of the mediation work.

Those efforts are indispensable. Although four years have passed since the Security Council decided to refer the situation of Darfur to the International Criminal Court, considering that the scope of the conflict constituted a serious threat to international peace and security, unfortunately the situation has not significantly changed. Mexico reiterates its appeal to the Government of the Sudan to take actions towards the implementation of resolution 1593 (2005) and to cooperate fully with the International Criminal Court, which Mexico strongly supports, so as to end the violence and impunity in Darfur.

Furthermore, my delegation is following very closely the tensions on the border between Chad and the Sudan. We call on Chad and the Sudan to seek to normalize their bilateral relations, take decisions that foster a climate of trust, and abstain from supporting the armed rebel groups operating on their territories.

My delegation acknowledges the joint efforts of the Government of the Sudan, the United Nations and the non-governmental organizations to address the vacuum left by the expulsion and disbanding of 16 non-governmental organizations. However, it is necessary to recognize that the quality and the levels of humanitarian assistance are still inadequate.

Moreover, Mexico reiterates its strong condemnation of the use of sexual violence in all its forms, in particular against women and girls, who are primarily internally displaced persons or refugees. We urge all parties to end such acts, take concrete measures to address those cases, and take all possible measures to ensure that such crimes do not go unpunished.

At the same time, we support UNAMID's work in helping to ensure the safe return and resettlement of displaced persons, in particular the voluntary return of about 1,500 people to their homes in the provinces of Donki Dreisa and Muhagiriya in southern Darfur.

We are concerned over the death sentences and arbitrary and illegal arrest and detention as well as cruel treatment and torture during detention by Government security forces. My delegation strongly supports work towards a moratorium on executions and abolition of the death penalty. We believe that the death penalty is one of the most fundamental violations of human rights. As we have often said, my country strongly rejects capital punishment.

Lastly, my delegation thanks the delegation of the United Kingdom for its draft resolution and supports the extension of UNAMID's mandate for one year, with special emphasis being placed on the importance of the commitment of the parties directly involved in the conflict, the international community as a whole and the regional organizations, which should all respect the peace agreements and the relevant resolutions of the Security Council. We trust that efforts in the region will have a positive impact on achieving a lasting peace in the country.

Mr. Mayr-Harting (Austria): I would like to thank Under-Secretary-General Le Roy for his briefing. I would also like to express our happiness at seeing the presence here today of the Chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee of the Council of Federation and Special Representative of the President of the Russian Federation, Mr. Mikhail Margelov. We are grateful for his contribution to the discussion.

Austria aligns itself with the statement to be made later by Sweden in its capacity as President of the European Union.

Austria welcomes the progress in deployment achieved by the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID), which now stands at 68 per cent, and hopes that the Mission will, in principle, reach full deployment level by the end of the year. We are also encouraged by the improvement in cooperation in the framework of the Tripartite Committee between the Government of the Sudan, the African Union and the United Nations. In some areas, improvements are nonetheless required, especially concerning the issuance of visas, customs clearances for equipment and freedom of movement of the mission.

A negotiated political settlement of the crisis in Darfur remains the only solution to the crisis. Austria would like to reiterate its full support for the Joint African Union-United Nations Mediation. We are concerned at the lack of progress in the implementation of the Doha agreement and call upon the signatories to engage in substantive negotiations without preconditions. An inclusive approach involving all stakeholders, including civil society, is essential. From our point of view, particular efforts should be made to include women. Regional actors and the international community need to make continued efforts to bring all non-participating groups to the negotiation table.

Like others, we are also concerned by the increased instability along the Sudan-Chad border and by the deterioration of relations between the two countries. We fully support all efforts by countries in the region to ease tensions. We understand that there are discussions under way concerning the implementation of the border observation plan as outlined in the Dakar Agreement. We would welcome a monitoring of the border, and if there can be a role for UNAMID and the United Nations Mission in the Central African Republic and Chad (MINURCAT) in this matter, it should be positively considered.

The matter of Darfur cannot be viewed separately from the other open issues concerning the Sudan. The Permanent Court of Arbitration announced its decision regarding the boundaries of the disputed area of Abyei on 22 July. Both parties accepted the decision of the Court as final and binding. That is a major step in the implementation of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement. Both parties need to avoid confrontation and now have to work together to inform the population about the decision and see to it that it is implemented.

The position of Austria on the issue of cooperation with the International Criminal Court is well known. At the same time, Austria welcomes the African Union initiative to establish the High-Level Panel on Darfur under the leadership of President Mbeki and hopes that this initiative will also help to address the matter of accountability. Austria believes that the questions of judicial reform and transitional justice mechanisms need to be addressed in any settlement.

Small-scale but consistent returns of internally displaced persons have been occurring in some places in Darfur. Large-scale conflict has decreased. Security conditions have to be created which are conducive to the return of refugees and internally displaced persons (IDPs). I make this point because the security situation remains volatile and poses an ongoing threat to civilians as well as to United Nations and humanitarian staff.

Austria is concerned that banditry and sexual violence continue to plague civilians throughout Darfur. To protect the civilian population it will be important to maintain the security and civilian character of IDP camps and to prevent any recruitment by armed groups of individuals, including children, in or around the camps. All parties to the conflict must show restraint and abide by their obligations to protect the civilian population under human rights law and international humanitarian law. We expect the Government of the Sudan to continue to ensure the safety and security of all United Nations personnel as well as of humanitarian workers.

The decision by the Government of the Sudan to expel and dissolve 16 humanitarian and human rights non-governmental organizations (NGOs) has had a detrimental effect on the work of UNAMID. Efforts by the United Nations, the Government of the Sudan and remaining NGOs have narrowed some of the gaps in the humanitarian field. However, the number of aid workers remains below pre-expulsion levels. Particularly in remote locations, it is difficult for humanitarian assistance to reach those in need. The Sudanese Government has to assume its responsibility to safeguard and provide food, shelter and health care for the population of Darfur and other areas affected by the expulsion of the humanitarian NGOs.

Last but not least, we would like to commend the work done by UNAMID personnel and humanitarian staff in Darfur under very difficult conditions. Austria fully supports the extension of UNAMID's mandate for one year, until 31 July 2010. We thank the United Kingdom for its efforts on a draft resolution on this matter.

Mr. Kafando (Burkina Faso) (*spoke in French*): I would like to thank you, Mr. President, for your initiative to convene this meeting on the situation in Darfur. I would also like to thank Under-Secretary-General Alain Le Roy for his briefing. We welcome the participation in this debate of His Excellency Mr. Mikhail Margelov, Special Representative of the President of the Russian Federation on the Sudan.

With respect to the political process in Darfur, my delegation would like to welcome, once again, the signing of the Agreement of Goodwill and Confidence-Building for the Settlement of the Problem in Darfur, which occurred in February 2009 in Doha, between the Sudanese Government and the Justice and Equality Movement. However, in the light of the ongoing disagreements, there is still much to be done by the parties to make it more effective, in creating the best possible conditions for continuing political negotiations.

My delegation urges the parties to work in good faith towards a framework agreement for a complete cessation of hostilities and the opening of substantive negotiations to put an end to the conflict, in accordance with the Agreement of Goodwill.

In this respect, we welcome the efforts of the Joint African Union-United Nations Chief Mediator to work with the parties; these support the Qatar peace initiative to make progress in the negotiations, and we encourage the parties to join these efforts. We also support the initiatives to make the political dialogue as inclusive as possible, especially on the ground, where the armed groups have come together and shown their intention to join the political negotiations.

We welcome the role played by Libya in the mediation process and the announcement made by the leaders of several rebel groups during the 29 June 2009 Tripoli meeting to undertake a constructive dialogue with the Sudanese Government in Doha.

We invite the international community, in particular the members of the Security Council, to use their influence to encourage the parties to undertake genuine substantive political negotiations, with a view to the signing of this agreement.

At the subregional level, continuing tension between Chad and the Sudan, in particular the incidents that have taken place in the past few days, as well as the connections between rebel groups on both sides of the borders, cannot but be a source of serious concern. We encourage these two neighbours to prioritize good-faith cooperation, in the framework of the Dakar Agreement, to improve their bilateral relations and find a solution to their differences.

We welcome the ongoing deployment of the contingents of the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID). It is essential, however, that the logistical means that the mission needs be made available to enable it to become fully operational and carry out its mandate. We also welcome the good efforts of the Sudanese Government and its commitment, in the framework of the Tripartite Committee of the African Union, the Sudanese Government and the United Nations, to cooperate fully in the effective implementation of UNAMID's mandate.

With respect to the issue of the international warrant for the arrest of President of the Sudan issued by the International Criminal Court, my country reiterates the call of the African Union, the League of Arab States and the Non-Aligned Movement for the implementation of article 16 of the Rome Statute in order to preserve the integrity of the political process in Darfur and throughout the Sudan. Once again, our position is that fighting impunity in Darfur does not exclude the quest for peace.

We take this opportunity to welcome the acceptance by the Governments of the South and North Sudan of the decision of the Permanent Court of Arbitration on settling the border dispute in the Abyei region. We are convinced that the implementation of this agreement in good faith by both parties will be another element in favour of peace in Sudan.

The humanitarian situation continues to depend on the security situation in the region, as well as on the need for the parties to honour their commitments and to create an environment conducive to the delivery of humanitarian assistance.

We applaud the Sudanese Government's decision to authorize the return of some non-governmental organizations that had been expelled. Burkina Faso continues to try to persuade the Sudanese Government, which bears the responsibility to protect civilians, to pursue its efforts, together with the United Nations, to ensure that humanitarian assistance reaches vulnerable populations. We also welcome the cooperation between the Sudanese Government and United Nations agencies with a view to finding appropriate solutions to humanitarian issues, and we encourage the Government to continue its efforts.

It is also essential that humanitarian agencies working in Darfur and the Sudanese authorities create excellent, trusting working relations. It is also essential that the international community, particularly the Security Council, continue to encourage the parties to create conditions of trust and dialogue so as not to weaken the political process under way.

In conclusion, my delegation would once again like to congratulate UNAMID on its tireless efforts and commitment, and, of course, to thank the countries contributing troops to UNAMID. We also thank the delegation of the United Kingdom for submitting the draft resolution before us.

Mr. Le Luong Minh (Viet Nam): At the outset, I would like to thank Under-Secretary-General Le Roy for his comprehensive briefing. I welcome the presence and participation of Mr. Mikhail Margelov, Special Representative of the Russian President, in the Council's meeting today.

More than a year and a half have elapsed since the inception of the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID) and its deployment in Darfur. In the face of enormous challenges, UNAMID has managed to attain 68 per cent of its authorized strength and has played an indispensable role in improving the security situation and facilitating humanitarian assistance in Darfur. Through its confidence-building patrols, human rights monitoring missions and humanitarian projects, UNAMID has made commendable contributions to the protection of the civilian population. The Joint Special

Representative's remarks during his recent briefing of the Peace and Security Council of the African Union, to the effect that the security situation in Darfur had considerably improved since the transition of authority from the African Union Mission in Sudan to UNAMID, testify to the viability of the international community's biggest investment in peacekeeping operations to date.

The increasing effectiveness of UNAMID operations is largely attributable to the Tripartite Mechanism of cooperation between the Sudanese Government, the United Nations and the African Union. It is essential to further promote cooperation and dialogue between the parties, not only in the field of peacekeeping, but also in humanitarian activities aimed at redressing the adverse impact of the departure of 13 international non-governmental organizations early last March.

UNAMID's mandated operations continue to be hampered by resource constraints, as well as by the recalcitrant attitude of many armed groups. We call upon all able donor countries and troop-contributing countries to extend the necessary resources to UNAMID, especially its urgent needs in air mobility and force enablers, in order to expedite full deployment of the mission. Actions against the rebel groups that sabotage and obstruct UNAMID operations must also be strengthened.

The current situation in Darfur and the subregion underlines the importance of UNAMID's continued presence. We welcome the decision on 21 July by the African Union's Peace and Security Council to extend the mandate of UNAMID for another year and to appoint a new commander for UNAMID. As the Security Council is expected to renew UNAMID's mandate later this month, Viet Nam reiterates its strong support for an early and full deployment of the mission. It is our deep conviction that, once fully deployed, UNAMID will contribute more effectively to the consolidation of the security environment in its areas of operation, as well as to the Darfur peace process. We thank the United Kingdom delegation for preparing a draft resolution on this matter, and look forward to contributing to its consensus.

There is no military solution to the Darfur conflict. Viet Nam has consistently reaffirmed its full support for a comprehensive political solution to the issue of Darfur. The recent resumption of talks between the Sudanese Government and the Justice and Equality Movement on implementing the Doha Agreement is a step in the right direction, albeit with limited success due conditions imposed by the Sudanese Government. All parties concerned, especially the rebel movements, must demonstrate goodwill and fully engage in constructive dialogue and peace talks without preconditions under the auspices of the Joint Chief Mediator, Mr. Djibrill Bassolé.

Tension in the Chad-Sudan border areas continues to threaten regional peace and security, as well as UNAMID's operations. We call upon all parties concerned and regional States to exercise the utmost restraint, resolve their differences peacefully and engage fully in dialogue to defuse the current crisis in Darfur.

Conscious of the organic relationship between peace and justice in Darfur, we would like to reiterate our concern, also expressed by the African Union, the League of Arab Nations and the Non-Aligned Movement, about the International Criminal Court's arrest warrant issued against the President of the Sudan, and call for further caution in this connection.

To succeed, mediation efforts must be better coordinated and concerted. We highly appreciate the close cooperation and consultations between Mr. Bassolé and Qatar, Libya and the African Union's High-Level Panel on Darfur in their common search for a satisfactory solution to the Darfur conflict. Given the indivisibility of peace in the Sudan and the critical thresholds of the 2010 elections and 2011 referendum, further and closer coordination of efforts between UNAMID and the United Nations Mission in the Sudan is crucial to both the Darfur peace process and the implementation of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement, and thus to restoring lasting peace and stability to Darfur and the Sudan at large.

Mr. Çorman (Turkey): We welcome the Secretary-General's reports (S/2009/297 and S/2009/352) and thank Under-Secretary General Le Roy for his briefing. We also appreciate the presence and contribution of His Excellency Mr. Mikhail Margelov, Special Representative of the President of the Russian Federation.

Turkey welcomes the progress made so far in the deployment of the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID). The many challenges intrinsic to the complex setting in which that deployment is ongoing have made it hard for UNAMID to reach full operational capability. The

Secretary-General's projection that UNAMID will reach 92 per cent of its authorized strength by the end of the year is very noteworthy. That goal must be met.

Turkey commends the significant progress already made possible through the work of the Tripartite Committee, comprised of the African Union (AU), the United Nations and the Sudanese Government. But much more needs to be done. The coming months will show whether that mechanism is able to reach its full potential. Alleviating operational difficulties faced by UNAMID, whether in the deployment and rotation of forces, the timely flow of equipment or local restrictions on its freedom of movement, is of immediate priority.

UNAMID is already an anchor of stability in Darfur. Once fully operational, it can begin to help turn back the tide. However, there can be no alternative to a political solution to the Darfur crisis. Turkey welcomes and fully supports the Doha process, the work of the AU-United Nations Chief Mediator and the roles being played by Qatar and Libya. While some important progress has been made, a cessation of hostilities that can lead to a lasting ceasefire has not been possible.

In the coming days and months, the Council will have to closely monitor developments in the Doha process and apply pressure when and where necessary. The peace process must be inclusive of all. Certain rebel groups must not be allowed to monopolize the process or dictate the pace, or indeed the terms. All groups must come to the table without preconditions and work with the mediation and their counterparts to bring about viable compromises. In order to facilitate a solution, the Council has to become more involved in the political process and make it clear to all the parties that intransigence comes with a price.

Turkey continues to be concerned about the humanitarian situation in Darfur. The Council has pronounced itself clearly on developments in that regard over the past several months, as has the Secretary-General. We are happy to note the important progress that has been made in filling the gaps that have emerged in the post-4 March environment. However, more needs to be done. In moving forward, it is critically important to keep the humanitarian aspect of the equation apolitical. The humanitarian aid community, working with the United Nations and the Sudanese Government, must be allowed to do its crucial work and should be supported and protected.

Developments on the Sudan-Chad border are a source of growing concern for Turkey. Cross-border aerial bombings, in violation of international law, cannot be condoned. Both countries need to understand that their interests lie not in conflict, but in cooperation. A change of tone and approach is sorely needed. Many agreements have been enacted and not implemented by the two neighbouring nations. A high-level mediation effort building on existing agreements, that takes into consideration the complex dynamics at play and includes the right incentives, is the way forward for lasting political rapprochement.

In all of our efforts with regard to Darfur, be they through UNAMID or the joint mediation effort, the African Union continues to be a vital partner. In that regard, Turkey believes that it will be important for the Council to keep listening intently to the calls made by the African Union on different and sensitive aspects of the Darfur crisis.

We welcome the draft resolution prepared by the delegation of the United Kingdom to extend the mandate of UNAMID for one more year. Turkey will continue to participate actively in the deliberations to finalize that text, with a view to ensuring as balanced and productive an end result as possible.

Finally, Turkey commends all UNAMID personnel and the humanitarian aid workers on the ground for their courage, commitment and composure under fire. We reiterate here that they have our full support.

Mr. Liu Zhenmin (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): The Chinese delegation would like to thank Under-Secretary-General Le Roy for his briefing on the latest developments in the Sudan and the progress made in the deployment of the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID). We also welcome the presence of Mr. Mikhail Margelov, Special Representative of the President of the Russian Federation on the Sudan.

We are very pleased to note that, in his report (S/2009/352) to the Security Council, the Secretary-General states that progress in UNAMID's deployment has recently accelerated and that it is likely that the goal of completing 92 per cent of its deployment will be reached. We would like to express our great appreciation for the efforts made by the Secretariat, the African Union (AU) and the Government of the Sudan in that regard.

Events have proved that the Tripartite Mechanism is successful and effective and has played a very key role in UNAMID's deployment. The Mechanism will also serve as a very important guarantee for the future successful implementation of the UNAMID peacekeeping functions. The parties should value this hard-won and very effective Mechanism for cooperation. We are convinced that, so long as the three parties maintain their will to cooperate and the current positive momentum, any new problems and situations that might emerge in the peacekeeping process in Darfur can be resolved.

Compared to the gratifying progress in the deployment of the peace Operation, the political process in Darfur has obviously encountered some major obstacles. However, without sincere and serious political negotiations among the parties, UNAMID will continue to face the problem of whether there will be peace for it to keep. Unfortunately, as a result of the exorbitant demands made by some armed rebel groups and their obstinate resistance to negotiation, the future of the political process in Darfur is very difficult to predict. Joint Chief Mediator Djibrill Bassolé has travelled far and wide and actively used his good offices to promote the Doha process. The AU, the League of Arab States and many countries have also made unrelenting efforts to that end. Those efforts are generally in conformity with the policy goals of the Security Council on the question of Darfur. They should therefore be given the support and cooperation of the Council.

We demand that all armed rebel groups show more political will to participate in the Doha process. We also call on the relevant members of the Security Council with influence on the armed rebels to take steps to ensure that those groups participate in the political process in Darfur.

China has always closely followed developments in the humanitarian situation in Darfur. We appreciate the contributions made by the United Nations, the Sudanese Government and the non-governmental organizations that have been providing assistance in Darfur to improve the humanitarian situation there. It is our hope that the parties will continue to strengthen their cooperation on the basis of mutual respect and consultation on an equal footing so that humanitarian relief efforts can be smoothly carried out in Darfur. China has already provided massive humanitarian and development assistance to Darfur. We will continue to work with the rest of the international community in helping the Sudanese Government to continuously improve the living conditions of the people of Darfur.

The AU is a very important strategic partner of the United Nations in resolving the Darfur issue, and its opinions and concerns deserve the close attention of the Security Council. China welcomes the efforts of the African Union High-Level Panel on Darfur, under the leadership of the former President of South Africa, to study in depth the situation in Darfur. We look forward to seeing the useful recommendations of the Panel on appropriate ways to resolve such issues as impunity, peaceful reconciliation and healing the wounds of war.

The warrant signed by the International Criminal Court for the arrest of the President of the Sudan has had negative effects on the political process, the deployment of the peacekeeping Operation and humanitarian assistance. Not long ago, the AU summit reiterated its clear opposition to the action of the Court. We hope that all the parties will fully respect the AU's position and strive to cooperate with its efforts to safeguard the overall objective of peace in the Sudan.

UNAMID's mandate will soon expire. We believe that the deployment of the peacekeeping Operation in Darfur has been carried out in very difficult circumstances and that its achievements to date have been hard won. That is due not only to the genuine cooperation of the Tripartite Mechanism, but also to the sincere and pragmatic support of the Security Council. We hope that, this time, the draft resolution renewing UNAMID's mandate will be focused and not revisit controversial issues so as not to undermine cooperation among the parties. In order to resolve those issues, the role of the Tripartite Mechanism should be brought fully into play. That would both assist the Security Council in smoothly implementing its task of peacekeeping in Darfur and serve the long-term interests of Council members in Darfur.

To that end, The Chinese delegation will participate actively in the consultations on the draft resolution renewing UNAMID's mandate. We hope that the Security Council can adopt it as soon as possible.

Mr. Skračić (Croatia): Like others, I would like to thank Mr. Le Roy for today's briefing on the situation in Darfur and elsewhere in the Sudan and to welcome the presence of Mr. Margelov, Special Representative of the President of the Russian Federation on the Sudan.

Once again, we find ourselves faced with a dichotomy when addressing the situation in Darfur. While we would like to welcome direct talks between the Government of the Sudan and the Justice and Equality Movement (JEM) — and, to some extent, between the Sudan and Chad — we are also faced with obstacles along that path, as well as with continued, albeit reduced, violence. That is certainly not commensurate with the goals that the sides are trying to achieve in the negotiations.

Croatia welcomes the stated commitment to the peace process on the part of both the Government of the Sudan and JEM, as expressed by both parties. It includes a reaffirmation of the Agreement of Goodwill and Confidence-Building for the Settlement of the Problem in Darfur, signed in Doha in February this year, as well as the exchange of lists of respective detainees and a willingness to work on the release of prisoners. Against that backdrop, however, we are concerned at the preconditions that each side has set before discussing a framework agreement, with JEM demanding a release of prisoners and the Government insisting on a cessation of hostilities. That has led to an impasse and to a suspension of the talks in Doha.

We are also concerned at the application of numerous death sentences by the Government of the Sudan and the effect that that is having on direct talks with JEM. Both JEM and the Sudanese Government need to understand that military action works only to prolong this protracted conflict and to put civilians at risk. We therefore wholeheartedly support the work being done by Joint Chief Mediator Bassolé, including by encouraging the rebels to come to Doha with a united position. We also support the visit to Darfur by the African Union High-Level Panel on Darfur, led by former South African President Mbeki, and look forward to its releasing its findings and making recommendations in the near future.

Croatia concurs with the Secretary-General's assessment and concerns regarding the deterioration in Chad-Sudan relations, especially in light of the continuing support that the sides are providing each other's armed opposition forces. We call upon them to refrain from such acts or acts that may lead to the escalation of tensions and exacerbate the already tense situation on their mutual border. We are particularly concerned about the cross-border incursions from Chadian territory into western Darfur. As the Secretary-General has stated, both sides need to exercise maximum restraint and return to the framework of their mutual agreements, including, but not limited to, the Doha Agreement of 3 May this year and the Dakar Agreement of 13 March last year. In that regard, we would like to express our appreciation to the Governments of Qatar and Libya for their mediation efforts.

With regard to the humanitarian situation, my delegation concurs with the Secretary-General's assessment that, although there has been an improvement in the level of cooperation among the Government of the Sudan, the United Nations and the remaining community of non-governmental organizations, serious gaps remain. The consequences of the 4 March expulsions have put a large number of innocent, exhausted civilians at great risk, and we note that the number of humanitarian workers has been reduced by almost 5,000, affecting some 1.1 million beneficiaries of food, water and sanitation aid and 1.5 million who receive health services support. We also note that the rainy season is coming soon and that the World Health Organization has warned of an increased risk of water-borne diseases.

Croatia is concerned by the observation made in the Secretary-General's report that the mission still faces considerable challenges to its freedom of movement and therefore to its ability to implement its mandate. We are also very concerned at the bureaucratic impediments put in place by the Government of the Sudan to obstruct the movement of contingent-owned equipment, including the Nigerian armed personnel carriers and Rwandan vehicles still awaiting customs clearance. We call on the Government of the Sudan to work diligently with UNAMID to address and resolve those issues. The Tripartite Mechanism now in place is a step in the right direction towards identifying and resolving such issues.

Considering the overall precarious situation in UNAMID's area of responsibility, including the continued armed clashes between the Government and rebel movements, stagnation in the implementation of recent initiatives, the build-up of forces and the possibility of further clashes along the Sudan-Chad border, we reiterate our appeal to the Council to place greater emphasis on the regional dimension of UNAMID's work and to enable that mission, other missions in the region and United Nations presences on the ground to cooperate more closely with one another,

thereby making them more efficient in fulfilling their respective and often overlapping mandates.

Finally, my delegation would also like to thank the United Kingdom delegation for preparing and distributing the first version of the Security Council draft resolution on UNAMID's extension. We stand ready to work with other Council members on completing this task.

Mr. Urbina (Costa Rica) (*spoke in Spanish*): May I begin by thanking Mr. Le Roy for his latest briefing on the situation in the Sudan and the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID). I welcome the presence among us of Mr. Margelov, Special Representative of the President of the Russian Federation on the Sudan.

Costa Rica believes that it is essential to move ahead on four major issues, all of equal importance, that hinder a political settlement of the conflict in the Sudan, directly affect the living conditions of the civilian population, and jeopardize the fulfilment of UNAMID's mandate.

First, relations between the Sudan and Chad cannot remain a source of instability and endless anguish for the civilian population, refugees and internally displaced persons on both sides of the border. It is time for maturity to prevail. The illegal raids, unauthorized flights and bombardment of neighbouring territories must cease. It is time to ensure the full implementation of the Dakar and Doha Agreements and for both countries to end their support for the rebel groups that they harbour, sustain and allow to take refuge in their territories. It is illegal, it is done openly, and it cannot continue.

Secondly, Costa Rica hopes that by the end of the month the Justice and Equality Movement and the Government of the Sudan will have made progress in their negotiations in the context of the peace process and the implementation of the Agreement of Goodwill and Confidence-building for the Settlement of the Problem in Darfur. In that regard, we recognize the work of Joint Chief Mediator Bassolé and support his initiatives to ensure a broadly inclusive process that brings other rebel groups into the peace process and, to that end, establishes a consultative forum in Darfur.

We appreciate the initiatives undertaken by Qatar and Libya, by Mr. Gration and Mr. Margelov, and by the African Union High-Level Panel on Darfur. My delegation looks forward to reading the report of the Panel, led by President Mbeki, to be issued in August, and welcomes its proposals on accountability for serious crimes, accelerating the peace process in Darfur and achieving reconciliation among the parties in the region.

Thirdly, disarming civilians who were involved in tribal clashes in the southern Sudan is a priority for the international community. Costa Rica is disturbed by the high number of victims and its potentially negative impact on the peace processes.

Last but certainly not least, we believe that attention must be focused on the deterioration of the humanitarian situation caused by the action of the Government of the Sudan against non-governmental organizations that were responsible for providing more than half the assistance to Darfur. We commend the efforts of the Government of the Sudan, the non-governmental organizations, the international community and agencies of the United Nations system to mitigate the consequences of that regrettable decision, but we are concerned about the sustainability of those efforts and about their quality, which is undoubtedly inferior to that provided before the Government took its decision. It is essential that the 2007 joint communiqué on the facilitation of humanitarian activities in Darfur, the main framework for cooperation, continue to be implemented, and that we support the work of the expanded High-Level Committee.

We must remember that the affected humanitarian organizations not only provided services, but also generated an atmosphere beneficial to the safety of the populations they served. Their expulsion created a vacuum in civilian protection in the areas where they were deployed. The alleviation of suffering and protection against abuse are essential elements of humanitarian assistance. Such concerns prompted us to call for the preparation of a report on developments in the humanitarian situation in the Sudan.

In the current circumstances, it is essential that international humanitarian law, in particular with regard to humanitarian access to victims and to the protection of humanitarian personnel, be respected. We regret that humanitarian personnel continue to be robbed and kidnapped, and condemn acts of banditry and sexual violence against the civilian population.

Costa Rica appreciates the contribution of the African Union to the peaceful settlement of the conflict in Darfur, but regrets its recent decision to block the cooperation of its members with the International Criminal Court. Like most representatives seated at this table, we know that this decision enjoys limited and half-hearted support, and we trust that the African Union, which has acted in an exemplary manner in many areas, will remedy a decision that taints its history and achievements.

Finally, we thank the United Kingdom for preparing a draft resolution extending the mandate of UNAMID, which the Security Council will shortly adopt. We reiterate our call upon the Sudanese authorities to cooperate fully with UNAMID and the work of the United Nations system throughout the Sudan. The Secretary-General's report notes that 92 per cent of UNAMID's total authorized strength will soon be in place. That will certainly improve the physical protection of civilians. We thank those countries that have contributed personnel to strengthen the mission at a decisive moment. We urge the Government of the Sudan to eliminate all obstacles to UNAMID's movement and patrol activities, to end all detention and improper treatment of its national personnel, and to remove all hindrances to the issuance of visas, as mentioned by Mr. Le Roy. In connection with all these issues, we acknowledge the work of the Tripartite Mechanism of the United Nations, the African Union and the Government of the Sudan to improve UNAMID's effective deployment.

The situation in the Sudan still requires the Council's tireless attention and a broader approach that takes into account all the manifestations of conflict in the Sudan. I therefore conclude by expressing our satisfaction with the recent definitive decision taken on the issue of the Abyei borders, and call on the parties to respect that decision, as they have pledged to do.

Ms. DiCarlo (United States of America): Let me begin by thanking Under-Secretary-General Le Roy for his briefing and by expressing our gratitude to the personnel of the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID), who operate in very difficult circumstances.

I should also like to welcome Mr. Mikhail Margelov to the Council and thank him for his helpful comments today.

As other speakers have noted, UNAMID has faced serious challenges in implementing its mandate, but despite these difficulties the mission has provided a stabilizing presence in Darfur. I should like to highlight four areas that we believe to be critical to the mission's success: outstanding deployment issues, prioritization within UNAMID's mandate, support for the peace process and the 2010 elections.

First, we are pleased to see the increased efficiency in UNAMID's deployment at large — progress that we attribute in part to the Tripartite Mechanism spearheaded by Under-Secretary-General Malcorra. We also acknowledge the increased cooperation provided by the Government of the Sudan, upon which UNAMID's deployment and operational ability depend. In this regard, however, we are troubled by the Government of the Sudan's continued failure to issue visas for UNAMID personnel in a timely fashion, as noted in the Secretary-General's report (S/2009/352). UNAMID's success is predicated on its having experienced staff on the ground. The pace at which visas are being granted and the outright denial of some visas indicate an unacceptable disregard for UNAMID's status-of-forces agreement. The Government of Sudan must fulfil its obligations under that agreement and promptly clear the backlog of visas.

The Secretary-General notes that he expects that all pledged UNAMID assets will be deployed by the end of this year. We welcome that progress, but we note that the assets that have been pledged constitute only 92 per cent of UNAMID's total authorized strength. Certain key assets, particularly critical air assets, have not been forthcoming from Member States. Nonetheless, we believe we must start to focus on measuring UNAMID's capacity to perform its mandate using the resources it has. We hope that in upcoming reports the Secretary-General will be able to report more on UNAMID's operational effectiveness.

Secondly, we believe that the Council must provide guidance to help UNAMID prioritize its activities. The Secretary-General has noted that two most important aspects of UNAMID's mandate are protecting civilians and facilitating humanitarian access. We agree. The situation for civilians in Darfur remains deeply troubling. We are particularly concerned by the level of sexual violence against women, and we ask the Secretary-General to work with UNAMID to develop a comprehensive strategy to protect women and girls from such gender-based violence.

No discussion of humanitarian relief can fail to mention the 4 March expulsion by the Government of Sudan of humanitarian organizations. Through the considerable efforts of the United Nations and the international community, a humanitarian crisis was averted. But the Council cannot afford to be complacent simply because the disaster has been warded off through emergency measures. Sustainable delivery of humanitarian relief remains our goal. We must continue to monitor the situation closely, and we will look to UNAMID to maintain its role as facilitator for humanitarian access.

Thirdly, we fully support the dedicated efforts of the Joint United Nations-AU Chief Mediator, Djibrill Bassolé. My Government's Special Envoy, Scott Gration, will continue to work closely with the parties in support of the Chief Mediator's efforts to obtain a cessation of hostilities and to push for a more inclusive peace process.

But as long as the Governments of Sudan and Chad are engaged in active conflict, there can be no peace in Darfur, as underscored by such recent events as the bombings along the Chad-Sudan border. Chad and Sudan have the sovereign right to protect their territorial integrity. But continued tension and rhetoric between the two harm the peace process and undermine stability in the region. We encourage both countries to exercise restraint, to refrain from supporting each other's rebel groups and to work to pull those groups back from the brink.

Finally, let me touch on the issue of elections. Under the terms of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement, elections are scheduled to take place in April 2010. The Council normally discusses this issue in the context of the United Nations Mission in the Sudan (UNMIS), but elections are a national issue and as such must also be discussed when we talk about Darfur. The extent to which Darfuris will be able to participate meaningfully in the voting is a real concern. We look forward to the United Nations elections assessment report and hope that it will contain information on the mechanisms necessary to help protect Darfuri participation. The Council cannot afford to neglect this issue.

UNAMID plays a valuable role. The United States supports the extension of UNAMID's mandate for an additional 12 months, and we thank the delegation of the United Kingdom for preparing the draft resolution.

Mr. Dabbashi (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya) (*spoke in Arabic*): I wish at the outset to thank Mr. Alain Le Roy, Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, for his briefing. I welcome Mr. Mikhail Margelov, Special Representative of the President of the Russian Federation. We are most grateful to him for his statement. My thanks go also to the representative of the Sudan for his presence here today; we look forward to his statement.

We are following closely the deployment of contingents from troop-contributors to the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID). We note that a large number of troops has been deployed. We pay tribute to the efforts of troop-contributing countries and the manner in which they have worked with the Government of the Sudan.

I note also the tripartite mechanism's great importance for the restoration of peace. It has proven effective in removing obstacles to peace, as indicated in the report of the Secretary-General (S/2009/352). I commend the tripartite mechanism for its positive achievements, including on the situation regarding visas for UNAMID staff.

There has been a decline in violence in Darfur, and we hope that this trend will continue, enabling displaced persons to return. Despite attacks on members of the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur, its deployment will continue. But we note that what is needed for peacekeeping is a political operation that enjoys the support of all parties — which is essential for deployment. Benchmarks for the implementation of the Mission's mandate will be unrealistic and irrelevant until the Mission is deployed at full strength and fully equipped, and until there has been tangible progress on the political front, including a ceasefire agreement and agreed modalities for ending the fighting. The highest priority is to forge a strengthened political process and to put pressure on the rebels to unconditionally join the dialogue and the negotiations.

Libya has a geographical, humanitarian and cultural relationship with the Sudan — and in particular with Darfur. We note the commitment undertaken by President Muammar Al-Qadhafi and by Libya to normalization. That is why we are working in cooperation with Qatar, the Joint African Union-United Nations Chief Mediator to ensure that negotiations resume on all aspects of the crisis. The African Union

High-Level Panel on Darfur recently visited Tripoli and met with the leaders of armed forces to discuss modalities for the resumption of dialogue in the Sudan.

Libya understands the effect of relations between Chad and the Sudan on the humanitarian situation in the Sudan and in Darfur. Libya is therefore pursuing its efforts to ease tension and ensure that dialogue can resume with a view to the implementation of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement and the Dakar peace process, leading to normalization of relations between those two countries. On the humanitarian situation, we welcome what the Government of the Sudan has done to ensure that humanitarian aid reaches those that need it, to encourage and cooperate with humanitarian organizations and to grant visas to their staff.

With regard to the International Criminal Court, we urge the Security Council to consider the concerns that have been voiced by the regional organizations, in particular the African Union, which is the principal partner of the Government in Darfur, with a view to continuing peace efforts, especially after the arrest warrant issued by the Court against President Al-Bashir. We hope that the Security Council will take steps to remove the obstacles to the peace efforts in order to fully and permanently resolve the issue of Darfur.

In that regard, at its latest summit, in Sirte, the African Union adopted a resolution, in which it expressed its deep concern that the Security Council had not agreed to apply article 16 of the Rome Statute. Here, we underscore the need to take into consideration the request by the African Union, which as the primary regional organization knows better than any other the best approach to the priorities for the settlement of the Darfur issue, especially since the African Union's commitment to settling the issue of impunity is one of its basic tenets. The High-Level Panel on Darfur, chaired by President Mbeki, has been set up to investigate the human rights violations. The Panel has visited the region three times, and we look forward to its forthcoming report.

In May, the Group of Experts on Sudan sanctions reported that the decision of the International Criminal Court had encouraged certain groups and had interrupted the dialogue or made it more difficult.

Mr. Rodolphe Adada, head of the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur, in his statement to the Security Council on 27 April, said:

> "The ICC issue has dominated and polarized Sudanese political life. It has weakened the position of those in the Sudan who have been working for compromise and consensus". (*S/PV.6112, p. 2*)

I do not think that that statement had a positive effect. Let me say that the fact that certain Security Council members did not take into account the wish of the African Union and of the African Member States that had signed the Rome Statute did not serve justice but, on the contrary, had the potential to undermine the efforts of the International Criminal Court.

There is no doubt that, after years of crisis in Darfur, we are increasingly convinced that that dispute cannot be settled without a comprehensive political settlement that enjoys the support of the international community and, above all, the Security Council, as well as the international and regional actors. That is a realistic precondition for restoring peace and security, putting an end to the deprivation and the impunity and achieving national reconciliation.

The people of Darfur are increasingly aware that a just and lasting peace and national reconciliation and development cannot be achieved by slogans, poverty or an arrest warrant against the President of the Sudan, but rather by support for peace efforts, implementation of development projects and the strengthening of State institutions so as to extend their administration throughout the territory. We hope that the Security Council will contribute to that end.

Mr. Lacroix (France) (*spoke in French*): First of all, I too would like to thank Mr. Alain Le Roy for his presentation and to welcome the presence of Mr. Margelov in the Council.

I would like to make a few comments on various aspects of the issue that we are considering. First of all, in our view, the political process must remain the priority. In that regard, we welcome the efforts of the Chief Joint Mediator, Mr. Bassolé, and the Qatari facilitation, and we hope that the talks suspended last June will resume as quickly as possible.

The Sudanese Government and the Justice and Equality Movement must fulfil the commitments made during the signing of the declaration of intent of 17 February 2009. We hope that the talks are inclusive, and we support the efforts made by Libya with respect to other rebel movements.

We have noted the establishment by the African Union of a High-Level Panel headed by President Mbeki, and we will closely study its forthcoming conclusions.

We think that the humanitarian situation remains of concern. We welcome the efforts of United Nations to work with the Government of the Sudan to prevent the decision to expel 13 non-governmental organizations last March from having too serious consequences. However, as the report of the Secretary-General (S/2009/352) notes, the fall in the number of humanitarian workers in Darfur has harmed the quality of the aid. In the rainy season, the health situation could deteriorate very quickly. We therefore remain very concerned, and we call on the Sudanese authorities to quickly restore an environment conducive to humanitarian activities.

Moreover, the security risks for the civilian population must not be underestimated. We are pleased that the violence has diminished since the establishment of the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID), but it must be noted that we have moved from a situation of conflict to less intense but generalized violence. The tension in relations between Chad and the Sudan is also of great concern, and we call on those two countries to implement their commitments and to refrain from any provocation.

On the deployment of UNAMID, we have noted the information given by Alain Le Roy. The Secretary-General underscores in his report the improved cooperation with the Sudanese authorities for the deployment of the operation. We welcome that, and we hope that the objective set in the report for the deployment of 92 per cent of the force by December can be achieved.

However, we note that, despite the progress brought about by the Tripartite Mechanism, the Sudanese authorities continue to pose significant obstacles. I am thinking in particular of the issue of visas already mentioned by a number of delegations, which Khartoum is slow to issue. More than 100 European personnel in particular, and others from other regions, are waiting for visas, and that situation is unacceptable.

More than ever, the population in Darfur needs a credible force that can contribute to its security. The year 2009 should see the full deployment of UNAMID and also of the United Nations Mission in the Central African Republic and Chad, which to some extent is its counterpart in the regions of Chad and the Central African Republic bordering on Darfur. We call on the Secretariat and troop-contributing countries to increase their efforts in that regard.

We are preparing to renew UNAMID's mandate. We hope that the negotiations held under the auspices of our British colleagues will soon conclude. The discussion on UNAMID's mandate should not be held hostage to other difficult issues, such as those of the fight against impunity and of the International Criminal Court. We believe, and everyone knows, that a lasting peace cannot be established without justice, and we note the absence of real efforts of the Sudanese authorities in that area.

In any case, differences of views on this issue should not prevent us from acting collectively and with determination on the other aspects of resolving the crisis in Darfur. We hope that UNAMID will fully carry out its mandate, in particular the tasks entrusted to it as a priority, namely, protecting civilians and providing security for humanitarian assistance.

Finally, we would conclude with a word on the implementation of the comprehensive political agreement as a follow-up to our consultations last week on the United Nations Mission in the Sudan (UNMIS). At this stage, we are very satisfied that the two parties have indicated their wish to respect the decision by the Permanent Court of Arbitration on Abyei. We hope that the follow-up to the Comprehensive Peace Agreement will continue to be implemented in this manner, in a spirit of cooperation and goodwill on both sides.

Mr. Takasu (Japan): I would like to thank Under-Secretary-General Alain Le Roy for his briefing on the current situation in Darfur. We pay tribute to the men and women of the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID) for their dedicated work in a difficult environment.

We acknowledge that the large-scale battles have been contained. But the security situation in Darfur remains fragile and demands our vigilance. Incidents of violence are continuing, and UNAMID personnel, humanitarian workers and civilians are falling victim. We should make every effort to improve the situation.

For ensuring security in Darfur, improved relations between the Sudan and Chad are important. Aerial bombing in the border area gives cause for concern about security in the area. It is incumbent upon all parties to bring a halt to these hostile and belligerent activities. I urge the Contact Group on the implementation of the Dakar Agreement to resume its negotiations by inviting both the Sudan and Chad to accelerate the reconciliation process.

With regard to the earlier humanitarian situation, we are relieved that the joint collaborative efforts by the Government, the United Nations and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) worked reasonably well to fill the gaps in delivering humanitarian assistance after the expulsion of the international NGOs. However, there still remain major challenges in many parts of Darfur where the local population does not have sufficient access to assistance. I urge the Government of the Sudan to make further efforts in providing necessary assistance. For its part, the international community needs to strengthen its support.

UNAMID is expected to play an indispensable role in stabilizing and improving the fragile security and humanitarian situation in Darfur. UNAMID has dedicated its efforts to the protection of civilians and the facilitation of humanitarian assistance as the first priority. Japan endorses and supports a greater focus by UNAMID on civilian protection. There is a significant number of members of the local population and internally displaced persons spread throughout Darfur who are in serious need of humanitarian assistance and are waiting for a helping hand from UNAMID.

Yet the current deployment remains at less than 70 per cent of authorized strength 18 months after inception. This makes it difficult for the mission to implement fully its mandate and to meet high expectations. To expedite deployment, cooperation with the Government of the Sudan is essential. There has been marked progress in deployment lately thanks to the good efforts undertaken through the Tripartite Committee comprising the Government, the African Union and the United Nations. We hope that further efforts will be made towards fuller deployment before the end of the year.

In this regard, I would like to reiterate the need for further improvement on the part of the Government of the Sudan of measures for facilitating assistance, such as the issuance of visas to UNAMID personnel, expedited customs clearance for necessary equipment and enhanced freedom of movement for UNAMID staff.

As the continued presence of UNAMID is essential, we support the extension of its mandate for another 12 months. We are grateful to the United Kingdom for preparing the draft resolution on that subject.

A political and negotiated solution is the only way of resolving the Darfur problem. In that light, I commend the Doha process under the active leadership of Qatar as well as the mediation efforts of Joint Chief Mediator Bassolé and the regional initiatives undertaken by Libya and Egypt. We also commend the valuable contributions made through the international efforts made by many countries in sending special envoys.

We thank Mr. Margelov for sharing his insights with the Council today.

It is our hope that all Sudanese parties concerned, including rebel groups, will participate in and actively engage with those initiatives, which in turn will be strongly supported by us. In parallel with those international initiatives, we should underline the importance of the local and national dialogue for peace and coexistence. Coexistence and reconciliation can be sought most effectively through comprehensive dialogue involving the Government, anti-government forces, traditional leaders, local communities and civil society. We support the Darfur-Darfur Dialogue and Consultation. We urge the African Union and the United Nations, in collaboration with the Government, to ensure that the voices of the many actors be fully reflected in the process.

Lastly, the political process based on the implementation of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) will have a direct bearing on the Darfur problem. We are encouraged that both parties have accepted the ruling of the Permanent Court of Arbitration on the Abyei border dispute and have respected the framework of the CPA. It is our strong wish that the positive momentum demonstrated in the spirit of Abyei will be further maintained and will contribute to the implementation of the remaining parts of the CPA and to the resolution of the Darfur problem.

The President: I shall now make a statement in my capacity as the representative of Uganda.

I join colleagues in thanking the Secretary-General for his reports on the deployment of the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID) (S/2009/297 and S/2009/352) and the Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, Mr. Le Roy, for his briefing. I wish also to express appreciation for the contribution to the debate by the Special Representative of the President of the Russian Federation, Mr. Mikhail Margelov. I also welcome the participation of the representative of the Sudan in the debate.

I wish also to commend UNAMID and its leadership for the important contribution they are making in maintaining and improving the security situation as well as in protecting the civilians in Darfur. In this regard, Uganda condemns continued incidents of attacks against UNAMID and humanitarian staff.

Uganda is encouraged that the deployment of UNAMID is making progress. We commend the Tripartite Mechanism, which has facilitated this process, and encourage all the parties to continue their cooperation within the Mechanism.

Uganda would like to see a peaceful resolution of the conflict in Darfur. We are concerned about the continued insecurity, the lack of progress in the peace process and the negative effect that has on the humanitarian situation.

We commend the Joint Chief Mediator, Mr. Bassolé, and the Government of Qatar for their efforts, which led to the resumption of talks between the Government of the Sudan and the Justice and Equality Movement, which had been suspended on 18 June of this year. We call upon the Government of the Sudan and all the opposition groups to engage in the negotiations envisaged by the end of July without any preconditions.

Uganda supports the work of the African Union High-Level Panel on Darfur, led by former South African President Thabo Mbeki, in its complementary role in the search for peace in Darfur. Uganda welcomes the commitment of the parties to the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) to abide by and peacefully implement the recent decision of the Permanent Court of Arbitration on the final settlement of the Abyei dispute. The resolution of the Abyei dispute is a major step in the implementation of the CPA.

The increasing tension along the border between the Sudan and Chad is a cause for great concern. Uganda once again calls upon the two countries to improve their relations and to implement the various bilateral agreements that they have reached, including the most recent one, signed in Doha. The normalization of relations between the Sudan and Chad is critical for a comprehensive and lasting peace in Darfur.

Uganda supports the extension of the UNAMID mandate. In this respect, I wish to express our appreciation to the delegation of the United Kingdom for providing the draft resolution for our consideration.

I now resume my functions as President of the Security Council.

I give the floor to the representative of the Sudan.

Mr. Hassan (Sudan) (*spoke in Arabic*): Mr. President, at the outset, I would like to congratulate you on your presidency of the Council for this month. Your neighbouring and friendly State has helped to maintain and strengthen international peace and security, especially in our mother continent, Africa, and in my country, the Sudan, which has strong and eternal ties to yours.

I would also like to welcome Mr. Mikhail Margelov, Special Representative of the President of the Russian Federation on the Sudan. I also welcome the Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, Mr. Le Roy, and thank him for the objective briefing with which he opened today's meeting, held to discuss the Secretary-General's report (S/2009/352) on the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID).

Today's discussion of the report coincides with an important step forward in a relevant area — the implementation of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement, embodied in the decision of the Permanent Court of Arbitration pertaining to the Abyei issue. The two partners' strong commitment to implementing the decision is itself an affirmation of the Sudanese people's ability to overcome differences and internal disagreements both on their own and with the help of the international community, and it affirms and strengthens the Sudan's determination to choose unity.

It also further promotes the possibility of achieving a speedy and permanent peace in Darfur, owing in part to much-appreciated ongoing international and regional efforts such as those exerted

by sisterly Qatar, and arising from a unified national position aimed at strengthening the initiative of the people of the Sudan. Regional sponsorship has also been forthcoming through the Arab-African initiative and the sincere and unified endeavour to support the Sudanese people's efforts on the part of sisterly Libya and Egypt. All of this has been accomplished under the direct coordination and supervision of the Joint Chief Mediator, Mr. Bassolé, whose mission we support and whose success we are completely committed to.

As we have previously affirmed in this Council, the Government of the Sudan stands by its commitment to achieving comprehensive peace in Darfur as soon as possible through an objective and goal-oriented dialogue. We expect the Security Council to continue to offer the necessary moral and political support for the national, regional and international efforts under way by sending strong, encouraging and supportive messages to those at the negotiation table in order to confirm its objective support for the option of a political settlement. The Council should also send a firm message to those boycotting the negotiations to the effect that the peace train will not wait for them, that the Council will not tolerate a military solution as a way to fulfil their goals and demands, and that a boycott is not an option.

However, the Security Council continues to throw its full weight behind peacekeeping rather than peacemaking, as if peace were supposed to emerge from a vacuum. National and regional efforts have been dedicated to creating this peace, and what we need now is the Council's support for the political process. It is important to note that a permanent member of this very Council, which I need not mention by name, continues to offer safe haven in its capital to one rebel leader who has continually and repeatedly challenged the international will and the peace option by boycotting the political process and endorsing an exclusively military solution.

We appreciate the genuine and sincere efforts of UNAMID, deployed under the leadership of Under-Secretary-General Le Roy and Under-Secretary-General for Field Support Susana Malcorra. We also appreciate the African Union endorsement in all its logistic and technical aspects the Tripartite Mechanism established by the Council. The latest developments surrounding the Mechanism discussed most recently at the sixth meeting of the Tripartite Committee held on 12 July in Khartoum. At that meeting, as at the five previous meetings, the complete commitment and cooperation of the Sudanese Government in facilitating the deployment of UNAMID were reaffirmed. The sixth meeting of the Tripartite Committee further confirmed that the overarching goal of the Mechanism is to deploy 92 per cent of the mission's troops and forces by December 2009, and highlighted the seriousness, cooperation and ambition that characterize the Committee's meetings.

As we informed the Council only a few days ago, the last meeting of the Mechanism addressed many important issues that have been discussed in today's meeting — and some that were not, such as aerial operations, including the provision of a landing base for tactical helicopters — such as mechanisms for expediting deployment procedures and operations, including the issuing of visas.

We must recall that the Sudan is a developing country. We expect the Council to see the situation in its entirety, rather than merely focusing on a dozen or so persons who experienced delays in receiving visas, as if that were the result of a Sudanese policy of non-cooperation or to delay entry, which is completely untrue. We have pledged to facilitate the deployment of personnel. We stand by that pledge and reaffirm it today. We will do our best to ensure that the mission deploys as required as soon as possible.

The meeting also discussed the facilitation of mechanisms and procedures pertaining to local procurement for the mission and customs clearance, as has been mentioned at today's meeting. I simply wish to cite examples that reveal the full picture. We hope that the Council will first support the Tripartite Mechanism by welcoming its achievements to date in terms of the deployment of the Hybrid Operation.

In the context of serious cooperation with regard to the deployment of the Operation, we would also like to refer to the manner in which the humanitarian aspect has been addressed. We would remind the Council that, in recent briefings on the humanitarian situation in Darfur, the Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs has stated that the implementation of the humanitarian protocol with the United Nations is proceeding smoothly. He has also said that the adoption of a fast-track approach has contributed greatly to speeding up access to those in need of humanitarian assistance, especially after the Government of the Sudan extended the protocol in November to facilitate the

operations of humanitarian agencies and organizations. In addition, as the Council is aware, a high-level ministerial committee is in place to focus solely on facilitating access for humanitarian operations.

With regard to the references in the report to challenges to humanitarian efforts, such as attacks on convoys, the Security Council is fully aware that some armed groups in Darfur have begun to target humanitarian convoys solely to steal and loot goods. I would also mention the various clashes between armed groups and between cattle herders, farmers and nomads. All of that indicates that the causes of the conflict in Darfur are all rooted in the scarcity of water. That of course has an impact on the security situation and, in turn, on the lifelines of humanitarian aid. In that regard, we emphasize the important role being played by police units. Sudanese police forces, working in close cooperation with the Hybrid Operation in Darfur, continue to work in many places to establish safe corridors and guarantee the security of humanitarian convoys.

As usual, some speakers have referred to the so-called aspect of accountability. With regard to the so-called issue of the International Criminal Court (ICC), the Government of the Sudan, which as the Council knows is not a party to the ICC, has a well-known position that does not need reiterating here. It is final and non-reversible. Major regional organizations have taken a stand on this issue — including, as I have mentioned, the African Union, which is both a strategic and a basic partner for the United Nations in Darfur, the Non-Aligned Movement, the Organization of the Islamic Conference, the League of Arab States, the African, Caribbean and Pacific Group of States, and regional organizations comprising two thirds of the Members of this Organization. All of them have issued numerous decisions and expressed positions that have convincingly reaffirmed that this heinous legal decision is merely political posturing that has nothing to do with bringing justice to Darfur or establishing peace there. It is a decision that targets the Sudan's unity and integrity as an independent State.

There is no need to reaffirm again today that the Sudanese Government has its own national judicial system capable of achieving justice and accountability. We hope that we do not have to continue to repeat that at the Council. We have fully welcomed and always cooperated with the African Union's Panel of the Wise, led by former South African President Mbeki. All we ask of the Council is that it work to overcome all hurdles to the political process in order to enable it to take its course. A political settlement is the primary solution to this issue.

With regard to Chad and the situation on the border, the Security Council has received several letters from the Government of the Sudan. In those letters, we have regularly informed the Council of an ongoing series of hostile acts, cross-border attacks and violations. On 16 July, those acts culminated in Chad's carrying out air raids inside Sudanese territory. We reported that action to the Council last week. I would like to reaffirm to the Council that the Government of the Sudan has had enough and is running out of patience. We are doing our best to continue to act rationally and to exercise self-restraint in the face of the transgressions of our neighbour Chad. However, patience has its limits. The Sudanese Government would also like to reaffirm that it will continue to assert its full, indivisible and legitimate right to deal with those acts of aggression and violations and to respond to them in a way that ensures that they will not be repeated and that preserves the security and safety of the citizens of the Sudan.

In conclusion, I reaffirm the complete commitment of the Sudanese Government to unlimited cooperation with the United Nations and the African Union in the deployment of the Hybrid Operation and in establishing lasting peace in Darfur as soon as possible. As we have always affirmed to the Council, achieving a lasting and comprehensive political settlement of the conflict in Darfur is of the utmost priority for the Government of the Sudan.

Darfur is a historic part of the Sudan. The people of Darfur are dear to the hearts of the Sudanese people; indeed, they are part of the Sudanese people. Therefore, we care deeply about their safety and security and about ensuring that they have access to assistance and can return to their villages and homes in order to resume their ordinary lives.

We renew our appeal to the Security Council to throw its full weight behind the political process and to support this operation and this process in every possible way in order to achieve a comprehensive and lasting settlement of the Darfur conflict. Thus, we can close this chapter of Sudanese history forever.

The President: I now call on the representative of Sweden.

Mr. Lidén (Sweden): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union. The candidate countries Croatia and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, the countries of the Stabilization and Association Process and potential candidates Albania and Montenegro and the member of the European Economic Area Norway, as well as Ukraine, the Republic of Moldova and Armenia, align themselves with this statement.

The suffering in Darfur has been allowed to go on for too long, and a political settlement is desperately needed. The African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID), which is at the heart of our common efforts to alleviate the suffering, cannot be a substitute for a political process; nor can it impose peace. It is up to the parties themselves to take concrete steps towards a political solution to the crisis.

UNAMID fulfils a central role in the efforts to provide protection and security and to facilitate humanitarian access in Darfur. It is encouraging that UNAMID is expected to approach its full strength by the end of the year. The current gaps between deployment figures and objectives are hampering the mission's ability to carry out its mandate. Also, we must ensure that the mission is adequately equipped to carry out its priority tasks of protecting civilians and providing security for effective humanitarian action.

The European Union notes the improved cooperation among the United Nations, the African Union and the Government of the Sudan through the Tripartite Mechanism. However, obstacles remain that hamper the effectiveness of UNAMID — for instance, with regard to freedom of movement, administrative hurdles in getting customs clearance for critical equipment, and visas for UNAMID staff. At present, nearly 100 nationals of the European Union are waiting for their visas to be able to work for UNAMID. I took note of what the representative of the Sudan said regarding this issue, but I wish to reiterate that the Government of the Sudan has the responsibility to remove those obstacles and ensure that agreements are implemented at the local level.

We are faced with a critical humanitarian situation that may further deteriorate during the rainy season. The Government of the Sudan and all parties to the conflict must respect and adhere to international humanitarian law and ensure safe and unhindered access to people in need of humanitarian assistance. The Government's decision in March to expel a number of non-governmental organizations has hampered the ability to provide humanitarian assistance to the population in need in Darfur.

The European Union takes note of reports that a small number of internally displaced persons have started to return to their villages. It is important to ensure that such returns take place in a safe, voluntary and dignified manner, with assistance and protection in place, and to monitor these returns.

The European Union strongly supports the joint mediation efforts of the African Union and the United Nations, under the leadership of Mr. Djibrill Bassolé, for a sustainable cessation of hostilities. We regard the multi-track approach of the mediation — which also engages civil society in Darfur — as essential. We call on the Justice and Equality Movement (JEM) and the Government to honour their commitments as set out in the Doha Agreement of Goodwill.

There can be no sustainable peace without justice. The European Union's position on the International Criminal Court is well known. The Court and its key role in the promotion of international justice have our full support. The European Union urges the Government of the Sudan and all other parties to the conflict to cooperate fully with the Court, in accordance with Security Council resolution 1593 (2005).

The national elections next year provide an opportunity for the Sudan to lay down a political path for the future. Peaceful, transparent and credible elections are fundamental to the consolidation of democracy. UNAMID has a role in assisting the United Nations Mission in the Sudan in preparing for and organizing the elections. The European Union welcomes the decision of the Permanent Court of Arbitration on the determination of the boundaries of the Abyei area. We call on the parties to the Comprehensive Peace Agreement to cooperate fully in its implementation.

The dynamics of the region continue to be marked by instability. The European Union military operation in eastern Chad and north-eastern Central African Republic, deployed in 2008 and transferred to the United Nations Mission in the Central African Republic and Chad in March 2009, should be seen in that context. The European Union, the Security Council and others have called on the Sudan and Chad to respect and fully implement their mutual commitments.

Recurrent cross-border attacks seem to make the agreements meaningless. Both countries need to show clear political will to resolve their outstanding issues.

The bringing of peace to Darfur is long overdue. In order to promote progress, all relevant actors within the international community need to pull in the same direction. The aim should be to impress on the parties the need for flexibility in the search for peace. Ultimately, however, the responsibility lies with the parties themselves. It is time for them to show concrete and serious political will and a commitment to peace.

The President: I now give the floor to Under-Secretary-General Le Roy to make his concluding remarks.

Mr. Le Roy (*spoke in French*): Given the lateness of the hour, I shall be brief. I should just like to highlight a few points that were raised and several questions that were asked.

First of all, we are satisfied to see that there is a consensus on the two principal objectives: the protection of civilians and support for humanitarian access to benefit those most in need of it. I believe that that will be reflected in the draft resolution that the Council will adopt shortly. Nevertheless, on the second point, humanitarian access, I wish to stress that the humanitarians with whom I recently met mentioned difficulties related to the risk of kidnapping in particular. As members are aware, there are currently three cases of kidnapping, concerning three different non-governmental organizations. Thus, necessarily, the access of humanitarian workers to the most remote places is sometimes difficult. Obviously, when we have our full capacity, we will be able to help them more, but this is a difficulty I wanted to highlight.

Secondly, with regard to the political process — which was frequently mentioned — we thank everyone for their support for Mr. Bassolé and his work. Indeed, there was praise for the efforts of Qatar; for the efforts of Libya, which have also made it possible to bring together a number of the rebel groups; and for the efforts of Egypt, which is once again contributing to the peace process, whose discussions will be continuing, for the moment, in Doha, Qatar. Obviously, we are pleased that all of those initiatives are coming together.

I have noted — and I think it is important to note — that the efforts of all those who have influence over the rebel groups are important if this dialogue is to be inclusive. In particular, we know very well that, despite all the attempts made, Mr. Abdul Wahid's movement refuses to participate in the negotiations. I believe it is important that pressure continue to be exerted on him to join the negotiations, as other rebel groups have done.

The regional dimension was brought up several times. With regard to Chad and the Sudan, the United Nations obviously continues to call for maximum restraint and to urge that no intervention take place from across the border.

Concerning the capacities and the deployment of the mission — which were frequently referred to — I should just like to make several clarifications and to emphasize that 12 of the 18 battalions are already in place and five others have already begun to arrive: a second Ethiopian battalion, a second Egyptian battalion and battalions from South Africa, Tanzania and Burkina Faso. Some of them have already arrived, and the rest will arrive in the coming weeks and months. The same is true for the police units.

There was also a question about capacity, apart from numbers. It is true that some 103 Canadian armoured personnel carriers (APCs) were recently withdrawn and that 62 Nigerian APCs remain at Port Sudan. At the recent Tripartite Committee meeting, the Sudanese authorities promised to lift all customs restrictions on those APCs, but as we speak they remain at Port Sudan. I appeal to the Sudanese authorities to expedite their release, which would be very important for the mission's capacity.

The Tripartite Committee has also considered the question of visas. Let me review the figures we have. Just before the Tripartite Committee meeting, 961 visas had been issued. Two days ago, another 120 were issued; the backlog consists of 327 visas — 197 for police, 47 for observers and the remainder for international staff. As to the timeframe for those 327 visas, we had fresh assurances from the Sudanese Government at the Tripartite Committee meeting that they would expedite the visa-issuance process. In the light of all the nationalities involved, it is very important that no distinction be made among nationalities so that the deployment of all UNAMID personnel — civil, military and police — can take place as soon as possible.

Mr. Mbeki's report was also mentioned. Let me clarify: Mr. Mbeki has indicated that his report would

be available in September, and it will then be possible to comment on it.

The representative of Austria asked about the possibility of more border monitoring. For now, from the standpoint of United Nations Mission in the Central African Republic and Chad (MINURCAT) and UNAMID, that was not a direct part of our mandate; also, the border is extremely long. We do not think that either MINURCAT or UNAMID has sufficient capacity to monitor the border properly. We know too that both the Chadian and the Sudanese authorities see this as an issue of national sovereignty. I do not see how UNAMID and MINURCAT could carry out strict monitoring of the border.

On the other hand, on something that is indeed part of our mandate, we are increasing patrols along the border to avert the risk of incidents. But, again, we do not have the capacity for complete border monitoring, and politically speaking it is not the desire of either the Sudanese or the Chadian authorities.

Let me conclude by thanking the Council once again for the support expressed today for UNAMID.

The President: I thank Mr. Le Roy for his responses and clarifications.

There are no further speakers on my list. The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda.

The meeting rose at 1.35 p.m.